Approved February 26, 2013

College of Arts and Sciences
COMMITTEE ON THE CURRICULUM

Meeting Minutes
February 19, 2013

Present: Andy Bernstein, Jerusha Detweiler-Bedell, Jeff Feld-Gore, Jim Grant, Judy Finch, Tuajuanda Jordan, Dan Kelley, Peter Kennedy, Joel Martinez, Bethe Scalettar, Freddy Vilches, Sara Rangel, Julia Yeckes, Kim Ulrich, recorder.

The meeting was convened at 3:34 p.m.

Minutes from February 12 were unanimously approved.

I. Course Proposal Subcommittee
SOAN 110 Introduction to Cultural Anthropology
Changing the description; students may not earn credit for both SOAN 110 and SOAN 115. This course does not fulfill a Gen Ed requirement.

SOAN 115 Introduction to Cultural Anthropology: East Asia
This is a new course; this course does not fulfill a Gen Ed requirement.

SOAN 398 The Adea: Grand Narrative and the Short Form
This course is now cross-listed with RHMS 398. Instructor consent is now required. This is a one-time course offering.

SOAN 444 Practicum
Changing grading options to letter grade with Credit/No Credit option.

All courses were unanimously approved.

II. General Education working group update

Co-Chair Detweiler Bedell shared that most of the work for this group was done via email. She thanked those who responded and took the lack of other responses to mean that there was no other tweaking of the descriptions desired. The Committee needs to discuss if this language will be shared at the next faculty meeting or if it should be taken to the Chairs first.

Co-Chair Detweiler Bedell made minor edits to the document that are not highlighted; the key changes are highlighted in yellow. The discussion mainly focused on the phrase "students will learn" in the division-specific descriptions. Co-Chair Detweiler Bedell is concerned this may be false advertising because, in terms of learning outcomes, the Committee feels it is unable to specify what students will

learn in Social Sciences and Arts and Humanities. Dr. Kennedy pointed out that that the current wording will work for Math and Natural Sciences.
Dean Jordan stated that if faculty cannot rationalize why students need to do certain things in the curriculum, they will have a hard time justifying the requirements to students and the outside community. Co-Chair Detweiler Bedell believes the courses students are required to take have been rationalized, but it is discerning which learning outcomes are being covered in each course that is the concern.

Dr. Kennedy suggesting having buckets within each division would ensure students receives the desired exposure. Co-Chair Detweiler Bedell believe she could get buy in for this idea if Social Sciences could take back their classes from category C. Registrar Finch stated that an impact will result if students are required to take a course from each A, B, and C. She also noted that the fact that each Music course, besides independent studies, currently counts; right now they have five courses.

Associate Dean Feld-Gore stated that inside of Arts there are both survey as well as practical/hands on courses, but there were not enough practical courses being offered. Registrar Finch added that this was a concern of the department as they were worried they would not be able to serve their Art majors due to the high number of outside majors who were taking these courses.

Dr. Bernstein stated that he spoke to some people who helped craft the distribution model; they confirmed that students cannot take more than one fine arts course, but that it would be ok for them to not take a fine arts course and substitute it for another humanities course instead.

Co-Chair Detweiler Bedell noted that there are no learning outcomes listed in the suggested definitions for Arts and Humanities. Co-Chair Martinez stated that while it would be valuable to have this, the language does not exist to do so. In discussing the two suggested definitions for Arts and Humanities, Co-Chair Martinez favors suggestion one while Dr. Bernstein favors suggestion two.

Associate Dean Grant suggested that the issue to consider may deal more with how students learn, not what they learn; verbiage similar to "methods of inquiries include" may be appropriate for this. Co-Chair Martinez agreed with this suggestion.

A brief discussion was held regarding the "Guiding philosophy for departments in selecting general education classes." Dr. Bernstien believes the final, highlighted sentence in the suggested philosophy is not necessary due to the previously highlighted sentence. Ms. Rangel thinks keeping the final sentence would be beneficial as it increases specificity. The suggested language also insinuates that some 400 level courses could be accepted. Resolution was not reached on this issue; the conversation will be resumed at a later meeting.

III. Exploration & Discovery working group update

Co-Chair Martinez stated that the group's work was done over email; the survey was created and distributed to the Committee and feedback was welcomed.
Co-Chair Detweiler Bedell stated that the descriptions in parenthesis should be omitted in order to simplify the survey as much as possible; she also suggested adding a no response/no basis to judge option to item number four. Co-Chair Detweiler Bedell also noted that the current survey lacks a way to compare pedagogical approaches from fall to spring semesters.

Dr. Kennedy expressed concern that item seven could be a self fulfilling prophecy for keeping the two semester system. Dr. Scalettar stated that it would be impossible for some courses to move to one semester when learning objectives are not being met in two semesters.

Co-Chair Detweiler Bedell made suggestions for questions that would address learning objectives for E&D and Core across semesters. These questions would address the unique, non-overlapping learning objectives from both semesters and ask what the perceived importance of each objective is for E&D and Core courses. Following this, the same learning objectives would be listed and responders would mark to what degree they think each of them are being covered in Fall E&D; the same prompt would be used to ask about Spring E&D. This data would give a general sense of overall importance fore each objective while also breaking down the results by semester. Concern was raised about receiving input from faculty who have not taught E&D, however Co-Chair Martinez believes their input is valuable as well as the goal is to determine what all faculty think about this.

Dr. Kennedy suggested that item eight could be used to tie E&D in with the Gen Ed conversation; Co-Chair Detweiler Bedell agrees that this is a good opportunity to bring the two together. Dr. Bernstein raised concerns about diluting the survey with a Gen Ed question, but Co-Chair Detweiler Bedell stated that since the pure E&D questions come first that this would not be an issue. Co-Chair Detweiler Bedell believes a question asking what the best home for specific learning objectives is (E&D, Gen Ed, or major) would serve to bring the two issues together.

Co-Chair Detweiler Bedell reminded the working group that demographic questions must also be included at the end of the survey. Items to be included would be faculty status, number of years at the college, as well as what division they are in.

A timeline, with quick turnaround, was set for the survey. The survey is to be revised by day tomorrow (Wednesday, February 20) then sent to the Committee for quick final comments with the launch the survey set for Friday, February 22. A reminder will also be sent out on Monday, February 25.

IV. Bringing together General Education and Exploration & Discovery

In order to get this ready for faculty meeting, share with steering committee and ask for quick turnaround in order to share with CC before faculty meeting. If they cannot do that, then we will need to skip that step and present to faculty.

Co-Chair Detweiler Bedell asked the Committee where they felt the group stood in terms of bringing Gen Ed and E&D together. Co-Chair Martinez feels they are getting very close as the group is only discussing details about language used in the Gen Ed descriptions. For E&D, Co-Chair Martinez thinks the data, once collected, may show that the status quo is working. He stated that the goal of the Committee is to present and help all the faculty understand the problem the Committee is facing. Co-Chair Detweiler Bedell agreed that the goal of the Committee should be to present the data showing how faculty feel about E&D which leads to the overall problem of figuring out how the learning objectives fit together with the curriculum.

The Committee agreed that this survey will be the final effort to collect data in regards to this issue.

V. Announcements from Registrar Finch

Registrar Finch announced that information regarding deadlines for course proposals will be sent out faculty soon. To get things in next year's catalog, they must be added to Course Leaf no later than March 15th. The Registrar is aware that proposals will come in after this deadline and throughout the summer, but they will not be added to next year's catalog.

Changes to departmental catalog pages are due not long after this; the final date will be determined soon. It important that the Committee be aware that at least two departments will be making significant changes to their programs soon. These items will be important and time consuming for the Committee, so there will be more to discuss at upcoming meetings than just Gen Ed.

VI. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, February 26th and held in Albany 220.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:47 p.m.